

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ROLE PLAY: CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTION

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Abstract: This research was conducted to measure the students' perception towards role-play strategy. In order to gain comprehensive and reliable data, close-ended questionnaire, open-ended questionnaire, observation, and interview were employed in this qualitative study. The finding indicates that students are more involved in the learning process as they contributed more participation in the classroom activity. In addition, students found role play as an interesting activity. This finding supports the idea from Harmer (2007:353) which states that the advantages of simulation and role-play are that both strategies encourage motivation and creativity. Nevertheless, feedback must be given appropriately in order to minimize error and improve the accuracy of students' speaking ability. Furthermore, different methodology and level of students can be considered for future study in similar research area.

Keywords: *implementation, role-play, classroom practice, students' perception*

Most of teachers admit that they face some dilemma in teaching speaking a foreign language. They still confused of how to teach speaking to their students. Thornbury (2005:1) mentions that teachers facing dilemmas of how to teach speaking. Thornbury (2005) also states that in order to teach this ability which was taken for granted is not easy. He also gives addition that speaking is complex, in order to able to speak, the speaker should acknowledge certain skills and several types of knowledge.

Students' perception here is essential in order to acknowledge their opinion toward teacher's strategy in the classroom. As the target of learning it is important to involve their ideas in the sake of their education achievement especially in speaking skill. As it cited in Centra and Gaubats (2005), Ryan and Harrison (1995) and Cashin and Downey (1992, 1999) states that student perceptions of learning were highly correlated with their overall ratings of teaching effectiveness.

Regarding those problems above, the objective of this research is to find out the strategies which are used by the teacher in the classroom in teaching speaking. Another aim of this research is to investigate the students' perception toward the teaching strategies which is used by the teacher to teach speaking.

Perception

The way people perceive something affect their act. "Perception is the way we all interpret our experiences" Otara (2011:21). Experts believe that perception involves signals in nervous system as the result of physical or chemical stimulation of the senseorgans (5 senses). The investigation of human behavior especially perception was developed since 1879. In psychological field McLeod (2007) states that there are two experts see perception in different ways, he mentions Gibson (1966) who believes perception as Bottom-up processing, and Gregory (1970) who disagree and presume it as a constructivist (indirect) theory which is lead him towards top-down theory. Gibson believes perception as bottom-up (direct) process. He sees that perception of surfaces which contain sufficient to distinguish different objects was more important than depth/space perception. Concluding the theories from Gibson and Gregory, perception can be built through bottom-up and top-down processes. In dealing with the new object people involve bottom-up process, in other chances when people dealing with object in their prior knowledge we can involve top-down process. It means that perception can be renewed or remain the same depend on how the people see the object.

Other expert Barth (2012) states that when sensory cells detect stimuli in the environment, the process of sensory perception begins. Barth mentions that sensory perception has relation with brain function and cognition. In its relation with cognition, sensory perception is commonly divided into three areas: auditory perception, visual perception, and kinesthetic perception. Those three sensory perceptions are assumed as a determinant of students' success or failure in schools. Students' perception here is essential in order to acknowledge their opinion toward teacher's strategy in the classroom. As the target of learning it is important to involve their ideas in the sake of their education achievement especially in speaking skill. As it cited in Centra and Gaubats (2005), Ryan and Harrison (1995) and Cashin and Downey (1992, 1999) states that student perceptions of learning were highly correlated with their overall ratings of teaching effectiveness.

Speaking

By overlooking its language function, speaking can be seen as a bunch of sounds. Speaking demands the speaker to be able to pronounce phoneme correctly, use appropriate stress and intonation patterns and speak in connected speech Harmer (2007:343). Regarding the function of speaking as communication tools, it demands more than just sounds. Not only have to be able to speak in different genre and situation, but the speaker should also use conversational and conversational repair strategies. Speakers are required to be able to speak in different genres and situation, and they also have to be able to use conversational and conversational repair strategies Harmer (2007).

Some difficulties in speaking are mentioned by Brown (2001:270) such as: clustering; redundancy; reduce forms; performance variables; colloquial language; rate of delivery; stress, rhythm, and intonation; and interaction. Regarding those difficulties which have to be faced by students' every time they are going to speak, it's nearly impossible to let them speak in the classroom without any special treatment toward this skill. Harmer (2007) provides several classroom speaking activities to open up teachers' mind of how to conduct speaking activities and one of them is simulation and role-play help students to simulate real life encounter as if they were doing in the real life.

Methods

This research employed descriptive qualitative approach. The population of this research is one of private vocational school in Bandung. The respondents and the sample of this research is one class of the last grade in the private vocational school. It consists of 24 students. The instruments and materials included close-ended questionnaire, open-ended questionnaire, observation, and interviews.

The procedure of this research is divided into some steps: the first is reading some resources to determine what topic would be discussed and how to do the research. This process was held on; the second is gathering several framework of how to make instruments; the third is adapting instrument based on the framework; the fourth is doing the observation, spreading the questionnaire, and doing the interview.

Finding

Close-ended questionnaire

32 questions which provided with five answers (agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree) were given. The data was analyzed by dividing the answer into three chunks (agree, neutral, and disagree). The data only mentioned 15 statements of 32 to let the reader focus on the important part of the data.

The data shows that for the first statement, 100% of students agree (50% strongly agree and 50% agree) that the method used by the teacher increase their vocabulary. The second statement asserted that 79,17% students agree (37,50% strongly agree and 41,67% agree) 12,50% students are neutral and 8,33% of them disagree that their grammar knowledge is improving after attending the class. The third statement shows that 91,67% students agree (41,67% strongly agree and 50,00% agree) 4,17% students are neutral and 4,17% of them strongly disagree that their pronunciation is better after attending the class. The fourth 83,33% (41,67% strongly agree and 41,67% agree) students agree 12,50% neutral and 4,17% disagree that the material is easy to understand. The fifth 91,67% of students agree (70,83% strongly agree and 20,83% agree) 4,17% neutral and 4,17% disagree that the media usage is help them to understand the material. The sixth shows that 91,67% students agree (41,67% strongly agree and 50,00% agree) 4,17% students are neutral and 4,17% of them disagree that the method used by the teacher make them more confidence to speak English. The seventh shows that 87,50% students agree (25,00% strongly agree and 62,50% agree) 4,17% students are neutral and 8,33% of them disagree that The material which is delivered by the teacher is related to the previous material. The eighth 100% of students agree that the method which is used by the teacher is interesting. The ninth 100% of students agree that the method which is used by the teacher is fun. The tenth shows that 95,83% students agree (41,67% strongly agree and 54,17% agree) 4,17% students are neutral and 0% of them disagree that The method which is used by the teacher makes them want to participate in the teaching learning process. The result of the eighth, ninth, and tenth statements are in line with Harmer (2007:353) who mentions that simulation and role-play have distinct advantages, it can be good, fun and motivating. The eleventh shows that 95,83% students agree (79,17% strongly agree and 16,67% agree) 0% students are neutral and 4,17% of them disagree that they want to master speaking skill. The twelfth shows that 33,33% students agree 20,83% students are neutral and 45,83% of them disagree (41,67% disagree and 4,17% strongly disagree) that they have difficulties in speaking English. The thirteenth 100% of students agree that this kind of learning process make it easier for them to speak English. The last one is shows that 95,83% students agree (58,33% strongly agree and 37,50% agree) 4,17% students are neutral and 0% of them disagree that this method is improving their speaking ability. Although the students admitted that they face some difficulties in speaking English, but most of them are willing to develop their speaking ability and they give good responses toward teacher's strategy in teaching speaking.

Open-ended questionnaire

Open-ended questionnaire was conducted to gather students' perception in learning English. It consists of five essay questions. Two out of five is given space to express their opinion if they disagree with the question which was given. In answering the first question, the students' mention some Medias they are: Computer (laptop), in focus, papers, dictionaries, cell phone, song, food, cards, puzzle, video, audio, book, and speaker were used by the teacher in the classroom. Answering the second question, students claim that the use of the medias help them to learn English especially in their speaking ability. When they are asked about their opinion toward the method used by the teacher in the classroom, they state that the method that used by the teacher in learning speaking is interesting, easy to understand, fun, stress free, and make them engage in learning English. Answering the fourth question, they claim that their speaking ability is improving than before, they also mention that they want to master English subject. Students presume that learning speaking skill in the classroom should involve interesting method, fun, involving lots of conversation, singing, involving lots of speaking practice, speaking games, it should be done in sequence, stress free, using useful media, was given examples, doing speaking test.

Observation

Observation was conducted to uncover teaching strategy which was used by the teacher in the classroom. In the beginning of the activities, the teacher gives stimulation by spreading a piece of paper which contains pictures of some places to go. She tells the students where she usually goes in the weekend. It turns that her story encourages the students to tell her where they usually go in the weekend. Aware of students' eagerness in telling their weekend, teacher asks them where they usually go in their spare time. After stimulating students to get involved in teaching learning process, the teacher spreading papers which contains situation and students have to do the conversation based on the situation which was given by the teacher. The teacher redo the role-play by giving the students different situation which should be followed by the students.

Interview

The result of the interview presents that teacher applies discussion, simulation and role-play as her teaching strategy in speaking. The strategy was used in order to let students get involved in the conversation. Moreover, by giving them a context, it will let them notice which utterance should be used, when, and in what context of situation. Even though most of students are in elementary to intermediate level, the teacher expects that the students have courage to speak English.

Discussion

The finding indicates students admit that they want to master speaking skill. The strategies (discussion, simulation and role-play) which are used by the teacher help students to increase their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, understanding the material easily, developing students' self-confidence, motivating (students want to participate in the teaching learning process), interesting, fun, and improving their speaking ability. Those responses are in line with teachers expectation, the strategy was used in order to let students get involved in the conversation, and have encourage to speak English.

Students also mention their perceptions that the strategy (discussion, simulation and role-play) is interesting, easy to understand, fun, stress free, and make them engage in learning English. The assumption that (simulation and role-play) interesting, fun, and engaging students to learn English is in line with Harmer (2007:353) who mentions that simulation and role-play have distinct advantages, it can be good, fun and motivating. In addition, Jarvis, Odell, & Troiano (2002) states that role-play makes students more interested in the material. Other study by Hua (1991) also shows that the use of simulation and role-play stimulate students' self-confidence, it is also stated that most of students including the weaker students who speak less are participating in the learning process. Students' perception which claimed that simulation and role-play make them engage in learning English is in line with Harmer (2007) who also stated that simulation and role-play can be used to encourage the general oral fluency or to train students for specific situations.

Conclusion and Suggestion

It concludes the finding is answering the statement of the problems. The answer of the first statement of the problem is that students are likely to give positive perception towards teaching strategy used by the teacher in teaching speaking, although they admitted that they face some difficulties in speaking English. The second statement of the problem was answered by the teacher, she used discussion, simulation and role-play in teaching speaking in the class. It is recommended to the next researcher who wants to conduct a research in this area, to use different methodology and level of students can be considered for future study in similar research area.

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